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usurped by two inscriptions. On the brow of the knight's mailed hood some idle and empty-headed loiterer has carved the letters D.S.S.; whilst, in characters of the latter part of the 15th or beginning of the 16th century, the following sepulchral memorial has also been *incised* on the stone:—

Hic. jacet. Iohānes. Culfer. qui. obiit. * * * * *
 * * Anna. Sigin. que obiit. * * * * *
 quorū. animā. ꝑꝑicietur. deus. amen.

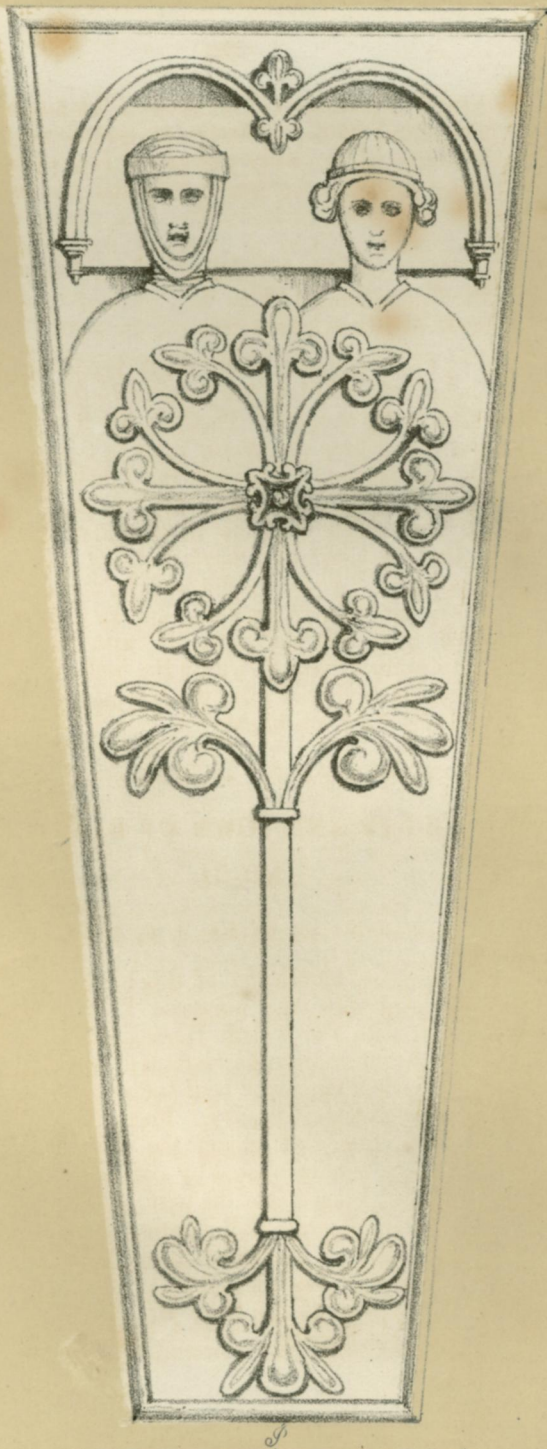
There are, as I am informed, about thirty heads of families in the parish of Bannow, who still bear the name of *Culfer*, and scarcely one in any other part of the country. Tradition has it that the first of them was drifted out to sea from the Welsh coast in a goat-skin canoe, and thrown ashore at Bannow. Amongst the inhabitants many Anglo-Norman names still remain, as Barry, Meyler, Stafford, Codde, &c.; but not one *Sigin*. There are a few of the latter name in the barony of Forth, and also a *Sigginstown*; *Sigginshaggard* occurs in the neighbourhood of Taghmon. A stone coffin with its coped covering-stone—the latter broken into three fragments—and an uninscribed sepulchral slab, ornamented, as is also the coffin lid, with the peculiar floriated cross of the 13th century, also lie within the walls of the old church, and, with that ruined fane, now form the sole memorials of the town of Bannow and its once busy inhabitants.

THE BAY AND TOWN OF BANNOW.

NO. II.

(COMMUNICATED BY MR. J. C. TUOMEY.)

Possessing an intimate knowledge of this locality for the last fifteen years, and disgusted with the nonsense I frequently heard and read in connection with the “Irish Herculanium,” I felt much gratified on perusing the interesting observations of the Rev. James Graves on “the Bay and Town of Bannow,” read before the September Meeting of the Kilkenny Archæological Society. Reflecting, however, that Mr. Graves’ observations, preserved among the archives of the Kilkenny Archæological Society, may be quoted by antiquaries long after the far future shall have been changed into the past, and feeling confident that I could more minutely describe still existing vestiges of this extinct town, than he has done, I published three letters in the *Wexford Independent*, descriptive of Bannow and its locality. The substance of these letters, at the request of the Rev. Mr. Graves, I now have the honour to present to the Society.



STONE COFFIN LID, BANNOW.

The Bay of Bannow is one of three, lying within the point of Hook promontory, the Saltees, St. Patrick's Bridge, and the Harbour of Refuge now being built at Kilmore. These bays are Slade, Bannow, and Ballyteigue. Behind Bannow and Ballyteigue bays, and completely land-locked, are two large harbours, loughs, or estuaries, entered through the narrow "ferries" of Bannow, and Bar of Lough, and protected sea-ward by two natural barriers, or breakwaters, of loose sand-hills—called "burrows." The Bay of Bannow is, comparatively speaking, small, forming nearly a semicircle, the diameter of which—running from a point nearly half a mile to the south-east of the old church, to the martello tower at Bag-an-bun head—may be three miles. The distance is nearly the same from the centre of this assumed line to the "ferry" leading into the inner harbour. It is bounded on the west by the high lands of Bag-an-bun, Sugard, and Fethard. On the north, by the "burrow" of Fethard, the Island of Bannow, and the sand-blocked eastern channel. On the east, by the old church, the site of the extinct town of Bannow, and a sub-denomination of the parish, at present known as "Lower Bannow." From Bag-an-bun to Fethard, within a short distance of the shore, there is good anchorage, and tolerably deep water, where coasters, beating against a head wind to the westward, sometimes come to anchor under the shelter of the high lands of Bag-an-bun and Sugard; but throughout the rest of the bay the water is shallow. The bay is free from rocks, except one, to the south-east of the bar, visible at half ebb, named Selskar. At low water, a wide expanse of naked sands is exposed to view, running from the church out into the bay. These banks are called "Bulls," and form the "bar;" through which, the waters of the inner harbour find their way by a narrow and winding channel. In bad weather a rough sea breaks fearfully on these "Bulls," and renders the attempt of the stranger mariner to reach the inner waters, hazardous, and generally fatal.

The ancient town of Bannow was situate on the eastern head-land of the inner harbour, immediately overlooking the mouth of the blocked-up channel, and certainly, if the inner waters required protection from an enemy's fleet, no better position could have been selected for the site of a fort. The present bed of this extinct channel measures 220 paces in breadth, from the cliff of slate rock, on the town side, to the cliff of like material on the side of the island; so that I may say the waters of the ocean rushed in through a deep gorge, which separated the island from the town. The distance from the west gable of the old church, in a straight line due west, to the precipice overlooking this channel, is 130 paces; and it is within this space, which I shall call breadth, and 200 spaces, which I shall call length, running by the channel, that all those formidable sand-hills have had existence, and beneath which we have been told lay buried the "Irish Herculanium." Let the reader ask himself what sort of a town could have fitted within

an area of 130 paces in breadth, by 200 in length. He will answer, a very small one, indeed. Just so, such a one, or part of one, as I have seen the foundations of uprooted during the last ten years. Over this area were scattered, time out of mind, small sand-hills, varying from five to fifteen feet in height, until within the last few years. One hillock still remains, at least fifteen feet in height, above the hard clay surface which covers the slate rock. But even this last of its once bennet-clad fellows, will soon be carted away to the manure heaps of the farmers' "bawns." During the progress of this removal, I have had frequent opportunities of closely examining the buried remains of this cabin-village. There appeared to have been no order observed as to streets—the sites of the houses lay in all directions, and the building materials were in all instances stones cemented, if I may use the expression, with *mud* mortar. I never saw one instance of lime mortar. I have seen the foundations of several houses laid bare, with the four walls complete, to the height of three feet. These houses varied in length and breadth, from fourteen feet by ten, to twenty-five by twelve. The mason-work was generally well and skilfully laid, considering the description of mortar used. The stones were for the most part, a kind of green flag, or slate, which is found beneath a deep stratum of clay, upon the coast about half a mile to the south-east; but among these were many of the *rounded* stones, which are always found upon the beach. A greater portion of these "sea-stones" were employed in the building of the church, than in any one of the cabins I have seen. The site of these cabins was not covered with any sand prior to their erection, as I think I can very satisfactorily prove; for when the manure-collectors had completely denuded the foundations of their sandy covering, and had also removed the last stone, they then commenced a deeper excavation, and carried off the surface upon which the cabins had been built, a kind of brown sandy loam, which was considered even better stuff than the sand to make up the compost heap; and thus they continued to excavate until they laid bare the hard clay substratum.

At present, therefore, a large portion of the site of the "buried Bannow," is not only stripped of the sand hillocks, and foundation stones, but even of the very soil or "corn earth," upon which those foundations had been laid by the hardy fishermen who once inhabited them; and over this cleared portion, the drift sand is again spreading, and the plant "bennet" waving in luxuriant verdure. To give further proof that no other traces of a buried town are to be found here, than those I have mentioned, I have but to state, that the plough yearly passes over every perch of ground in this neighbourhood, with the exception of the space already referred to; and another strip, containing about three acres, stretching along the "banks" to the south-east, over which lies a thin coat of sand, evidently drifted there, but through which a close and thick herbage has sprung up. When any of this

sand is removed by the party who rents it, instead of the relic of a house being discovered, you have before you *ridges*, plainly marked out, as they happened to be, when the sand overspread them. I will give one proof more, that nothing now lies buried beneath the "Green of Bannow," as this piece of natural pasturage is called. Let the observer descend the "banks"—(those banks upon which it is maintained, that the Right Hon. George Ogle first sang "Molly Asthore"), and take his position on the strand, he will then have a full view of a section of the foundation of the "green," and the space upon which the cabin foundations stood, cut perpendicularly to the plane of the horizon, by the dashing of the surf against the banks—first, rock, over that, clay, and uppermost, a thin coating of sand. And here I will stop to notice an opinion advanced by some, viz., that the site of the ancient town has been carried away by the encroachments of the sea upon the land. Such an event is possible, but very improbable. If the so-much-talked-of town were swept away by the ocean, it must have stood opposite those 100 perches, for the rock at both extremities of this distance, rises up to the surface of the bank, or nearly so; and presents a bold iron front to the watery element. Even here the land cannot at any time have projected far into the bay, for if so, the eastern channel could never have had existence; as in that case the island and mainland would have formed one and the same plain. From a long and intimate knowledge of this locality, and from a close and minute examination of every perch of it, added to the traditions of the people, I am satisfied, that if a town of any importance ever existed in it, the said town has never been swept away by the advances of the ocean, nor overwhelmed by drifting sands. The portion of it, buried beneath the sand, I have clearly and accurately defined, and I have also alluded to the unlikelihood of its having been carried off by the sea. If, then, a town existed containing all the streets mentioned by the Rev. Mr. Graves, and more fully noticed by a correspondent in the *Wexford Independent*, in October, 1848, that town stood to the east, and north-east of the old church, and by the shore at the inner harbour, about the locality where the Coast-guard station now stands. That the boundary of the extinct borough, ran farther eastward than this point I think I can prove, and if so, it will be good evidence that the old corporation spread itself over the now corn fields and pastures about the Coast-guard station. At the right-hand side of the public road, before you approach the station, and at a few hundred paces to the eastward of it, is the cozy farmstead of old Dicky Kane—the last representative of the burgess-roll of Bannow. He is now in himself what remains of the municipality, and in the enjoyment of any vestige of the corporate rights which can be still traced in the locality. Undo the fastening of the little iron gate, and he will give you the following information:—He is the only tenant whom the Marquis of Ely has in this parish, and he holds his property at a *pepper-corn rent*. These possessions and privi-

leges are—the lands upon which his house, barn, haggard, and kitchen-garden stand—a speck surrounded by the lands of other proprietors. By the same tenure he possesses about a rood of land adjoining the old church, and upon which the castle stood, as marked in the Ordnance map, but which the poor man,—ignorant of its value in a national point of view, as a remain of antiquity—did pull down, and of the materials construct a cow-house and stable. Further, by the same title, and for the same consideration, he enjoys a field, called “acre,” but which the sea has now nearly reduced to half that area, at about two miles eastward on the coast—another speck, surrounded by the lands of Thomas Boyse, Esq. His privileges are—the right of pasturage on the Green of Bannow for a *collop* of sheep, a sow and her litter of *bon-neens*, a goose, and her mate, and their flock of goslings; and these privileges, with the right of collecting sea-weed on the beach, he enjoys and exercises without let or molestation. It is now a matter of history that this borough, previous to the Act of Union, belonged to the Loftus family, and tradition has it that a carriage road ran from the church to Ballymagin Castle, still the property of Sir Francis Loftus, of Mount Loftus, County of Kilkenny. This road ran nearly due east in a straight line from the church, until it approached the sea at a place called Cross-lake, nearly a mile distant from the church. Cross-lake derived its name from the number of wooden crosses placed there, according to custom, by funeral parties on their route to the church of Bannow. Some of these crosses are still remembered by parties yet living. From Cross-lake, the road ran on the sea-banks to Cullinstown, a distance of two miles. At present there is no trace of this road to be found. The portion of it, between Bannow and Cross-lake, has long since been levelled with the adjoining fields; and the portion from Cross-lake to Cullinstown, has been swept away by the waters of St. George’s Channel. This little property, with the rights and privileges enumerated, go far to prove that the town was situate in the direction of Kane’s house, and that the cabins, revealed from beneath the sand-hills, were but a fishing suburb, at the entrance of the eastern channel. Kane tells me, that he was informed by a man named Reid, a revenue officer, stationed at the fort of Roslare, Wexford, previous to 1798, that he (Reid) saw a book in the Custom House at Wexford, giving an account of the revenue taken at the port of Bannow, but that said book was destroyed, or carried off, during the period the insurgents remained masters of Wexford.

As an example of the exaggerated strain in which a certain class of writers on Irish antiquities have been prone to indulge, I transcribe from the second volume of the *Dublin Penny Journal*, p. 32, the following highly-wrought specimen of romance, purporting to be a faithful description of the “Ruins of Bannow,” and authenticated by the name of the “Rev. Robert Walsh”:—

“The ground was a low eminence of sand, partly covered with a

scanty vegetation, on which some sheep and goats were feeding. It was everywhere undulated with hillocks, between which were long straight depressions, having an appearance more formal and regular than is usually seen among sand-hills. *Rising from these was a square mass of solid masonry*, about seven feet high, which, with the exception of the ruined church walls, was the only appearance of the work of man visible around us. After looking about here for some time, I proposed to my friend to proceed to the town of Bannow, when he astonished me by saying, 'you are now in the High-street, in the midst of it.' In effect so I was. *The sands of the shore had risen, and swallowed it up as effectually as the ashes and lava of Mount Vesuvius could have done.* The hillocks were the houses—the straight depressions were the streets—the dilapidated walls, half covered, were the high parish church—and *the square tube of masonry was the massive chimney of the town-house, peeping above the soil, while the rest of the edifice was buried under it.*

* * In fact, the whole appearance of the place—the impression that we were standing over a once populous city, which yet remained almost entire, with all its busy inhabitants, it might be, buried under our feet, gave to its present silence and solitude an interest greater, perhaps, than is attached to any other remains in the united kingdom."

I have shown, I trust clearly, how inapplicable all this fine writing is with regard to the town—I shall, by and by, allude to the church—in the mean time, I must linger a little about the "massive chimney of the town-house." One would infer that there it stood erect, rising out of the sands, like one of the ancient round towers of Ireland. Alas for the reality! In the south-west side of the grave-yard may be seen a lump of masonry; approach it, and you will find it a chimney lying in a lateral position. The funnel is about eighteen inches square, and the sides of the same dimensions. At present there are only three feet of it complete; but you can trace its former length—or, when erect, height, by portions of its masonry, for twelve feet, when a grave-stone cuts it at right angles, and all further vestige of its length is cut off by the other graves. But there are those still alive, who recollect to have seen it in three large masses, at least from thirty to forty feet in length, previous to the erection of the wall surrounding the grave-yard—some of its stones having been used in building this wall. The house to which this chimney was attached, must have stood outside the present grave-yard, to the south, and some chiselled stones were found in the rubbish, about this chimney-shaft, and carried off more than half a century ago. It certainly was a "massive chimney," to whatsoever building it belonged, but I think we have but little authority for ascribing it to the Tholsel of the extinct corporation. It is, however, a well authenticated fact, that previous to the Act of Union, the notices of election were posted on this fallen chimney-shaft. Why it was so, may be accounted for thus:—There was no house, or wall, in the neighbourhood, save those of the church and the castle, and

the law, I suppose, declared that such *notices* should be posted within the boundaries of the borough. An eye-witness gives the following account of the last election for this borough:—"It was very shortly after the 'rebellion,' on a fine day, about noon, when I saw a carriage drive down to the old church. I went over to it, and there, sure enough, was the lord, himself, and two or three other gentlemen. They took out of the carriage, some big books, and placed them upon the old chimney; and one gentleman began to write, but before they had concluded their work, a heavy shower of rain, obliged us to seek shelter under the walls of the church. The *lord* asked me, did I see the old castle, and my father's little park, behind it. I said, 'yes, my lord.' 'Well, then,' said he, 'if we shall ever have another election here, I will have a house built on that garden, that we may not again be caught in the rain.' But I never again saw his lordship alive, but I attended his funeral, and a great, and mighty one it was; filling the road from Salt-mills, to Fethard. For in a very few years afterwards, they brought his lordship's dead body from Dublin to Fethard to be buried."

This story of using the grass-covered relic of the massive chimney as a table, by the returning officer at the nomination of members to serve in the Irish Parliament, I think, very satisfactorily shows the reason of coupling it with the Tholsel. Hence the imaginative antiquaries of the present century dubbed it the chimney of the town-hall, and others pictured it rising up in municipal grandeur from the sands, where the rest of the building was supposed to lie buried; whereas, there is no sand at all about the portion of it which now remains, but only the graves of the dead.

Mr. Graves leaves me very little to write on the "old church;" the Rev. gentleman has very accurately described it. The nave was entered through two porches, one on either side. That on the north side is still in a very good state of preservation. It measures nine feet by nine, in the interior, and has a pointed-arch roof of stone—the outer doorway is built up; but the jambs and pointed archway are still perfect. This doorway is six feet wide, but the one leading out of it into the nave is but three feet wide at the porch side; yet, so great is the splay, that it measures six feet at the nave side. There are but portions of the west and south walls of the southern porch standing, which, I should think, was similar to the one described, with this difference, that the doorway leading in to the one at the north side was from the north, and into the south one, from the east. Over the doorway leading into the nave out of the south porch, is a heavy lintel of granite, from either end of which a pointed arch springs; and behind one end of this lintel, another block of granite projects out of the wall with a hole in it, nearly three inches in diameter, evidently to receive the *toe* by which the door swang. The jambs of this doorway are a good deal damaged, but a single glance at it, shews it to be coeval with the remainder of the building. Behind the jambs, are two square holes, evidently to receive the night-bolt, or

bar ; and these holes ran far enough into the walls to conceal the bar in the day-time. All the doorways are arched ; and the perfect state of the northern porch may be judged, when I say, that in the autumn of 1848, a man and his wife, with one child, made it their place of abode for some time. The gold-dreamers made a large and deep “ diggin ” in the south-west corner of the nave, some years since,—I had thereby an opportunity to see the foundations, which were sunk deep below the present surrounding surface. A similar excavation, and for a like purpose, was made last winter in Kane’s garden, adjoining the site of the extinct castle. These two instances of an attempt to seek a home California, prove that we have still some of the *gold-dreamers* in this neighbourhood. There was a window in the western end of the nave ; the lower portion of it is still visible, but about twenty years ago, the upper portion of the gable fell outwards, and still covers the ground to a distance of twelve paces from the wall. Among these cemented lumps of masonry may be still traced a portion of the belfry, and the two bell-holes, with the very *ruts* which the ends of the bell-beams left in the sockets, cut into the stone. Within the doorway of the nave, at the left-hand side as you enter, is to be seen a holy-water stone, peeping up from among the rubbish. Years ago another, and larger and more beautiful one, probably the font, was taken from this ruin, and placed in the chapel of Rathangan ; but it was again restored to Bannow, through the influence of the late “ Counsellor ” Carr, as he was popularly called, of Graigue, Bannow. The Roman Catholic clergyman of this parish had it since removed from the old church, and it, at present, is used as a font in the new chapel at Carrig, Bannow. Within the chancel are two tombs of modern date, which may deserve a passing notice, not from any celebrity attached to the memory of the parties, the resting-place of whose dust they point out, but with regard to two other individuals connected with them ; one of whom has been a distinguished ornament of our country, and the other has written a good deal upon Ireland in general, and Bannow in particular. On one tomb may be read :—

“ Richard Boyse, Esq., died 23rd January, 1793,
aged 67 years.”

Now, I am informed that this gentleman was brother to the Rev. Mr. Boyse, who, by his cakes and kindness allured young Curran from his marbles, in the ball-alley of Newmarket, and paved the way for the future greatness of John Philpot Curran, the Master of the Rolls. On the other is engraved :—

“ Anna Maria Carr, died 26th July, 1815,
aged 56 years.”

This lady was the grandmother of Mrs. S. C. Hall, the authoress, and, I am sorry to say, caricaturist of the Irish peasantry. As Miss Fielding, Mrs. Hall and her family are kindly remembered here, but as Mrs.

Hall the “book-maker,” she has attained an unenviable notoriety with the simple and honest peasantry with whom she spent the happiest portion of any life—her early youth. This lady has shamefully borne “false witness” against the manners and customs of the Irish people, and against none more so than against her native parish, Bannow. I never could discover here anything like a truthful original for any of her *sketches*, but one, and from this one she must have painted all her caricatures. There is an old and idiotic beggarman, Tom Grant, who has travelled backwards and forwards through this district for the last twenty-five or thirty years. This “natural” has his fingers covered over with large brass rings; his old coat, in like manner, with large brass buttons; and frequently, two hats on his head, and a third in his hand. He is decidedly a harmless simpleton, and decked out in all the ridiculous tom-foolery imaginable. His language is pretty similar to that which Mrs. S. C. Hall put into the mouths of our people. “My lady,” and all the other expressions, with which she has gulled her English, and, I fear, many of her Irish readers, are quite “on the top of his tongue.” In the “Bannow Boatman,” I found a respectable person—a Mr. Patrick Cahill. His father rented the Island of Bannow, 143½ acres, and the “boatman,” in early life, had added the trade of mariner to that of farmer, and sailed his own sloop out of Bannow to Cork, Dublin, and the Welsh coast. But in after life, when he had settled all his children, and handed over the management of his farm to his son-in-law, he amused himself by keeping the “ferry-boat,” and, as fond of grog as any sailor, his income by the boat enabled him to have “a drop in the bottle” at all times for his own private use. Cahill was witty and intelligent, with a good deal of that easy humour for which our people are proverbial. He had fitted up a little hut at the ferry for his boat-gear, and shelter for himself in a shower of rain, and he subsequently gave this cabin to a poor man as a place of residence. Cahill told me that he frequently had “ferried” Mr. and Mrs. Hall, and had answered all their inquiries *to their satisfaction*. He was well aware of the publication of the “Bannow Boatman,” and said, “that more than one gentleman made him bring out the bottle, lie down on the bank, and drink, to see could he realize Mrs. Hall’s book-picture.” Previous to the establishment of a sub-postoffice in Bannow, a man, named Williams, was employed to carry the letter-bags of the neighbouring gentlemen, thrice a week, to and from Wexford. Mrs. Hall had frequent opportunities of meeting this poor man in the kitchen of her grandmother, and she afterwards converted those interviews into £. s. d. “Ben the Master” still lives, and was really Mrs. S. C. Hall’s school-master—he placed that pen (which she has since so sadly abused), for the first time in her life, in her hand. Benjamin Ratford says—“that for nearly four years, he walked daily a distance of two miles, to instruct Miss Fielding in writing and arithmetic, at Graigue House, Bannow; that she was very clever—would swallow learning; and notwithstand-

ing the playful injunctions of her grandmother, to use the birch, that he never had occasion to do so; that she was about fourteen or fifteen years of age when she left Bannow for England, where, he supposes, she met with greater masters than he was." "Burnt Aigle" is pure fiction—a sop to gratify the palate of John Bull, at the expense of the Irish. I make no apology for this digression; I started with the fixed intention of describing Bannow, as it really is, and I could not do so, without clearing away the mist of fiction, in which the writings of Mrs. S. C. Hall had enwrapped it.

To return to the old church:—Near the doorway leading into the nave, may be seen an unpretending grave-stone, with the following inscription:—

"Erected by Peter French to the memory of his parents: 1781. Here lieth the body of Walter French his grandfather, who died January the 4th, 1701, aged 140 years."

I have made strict inquiries among the descendants of this Walter, as to the truth of his living 140 years, and they have assured me, that the grave-stone records a fact. Since Mr. Graves' visit to this locality, the windows of the chancel have been built up with lime and stone; and I am informed that it is the intention of the party who has done so to erect a gate, or door, across the arch-way, so as to preserve the tombs of the dead, and the vestiges of antiquity, in this portion at least of the church, from being desecrated and destroyed, by the idle and mischievous urchins who make this grave-yard a play-ground and a ball-alley. Within the last few years the monuments, &c., in this church have suffered more from the hand of the idle and unthinking, than they had during the previous century. The cover of the stone coffin was broken into three fragments—the tomb of Mrs. Carr was completely smashed by the fall of a stone from the top of the gable of the chancel, and many other tombs broken into fragments by idle boys for their amusement. The form of the grave-yard is nearly square, it is surrounded by a stone wall, and contains about a rood and a half of land, Irish measure. There is one curious fact touching the sand-hillocks which covered the remains of the cabins. The sand advanced to within twelve paces of the church, and then stood still, as if the Almighty had put forth his hand to protect the sacred ruin from the impending destruction. There is no foundation whatever for the statement that the walls are already "half-covered." It will be, however, for the future antiquary to record whether or not the old church of Bannow may not yet be overwhelmed, for the influence of the drifting sands is felt in its immediate vicinity. The church of Bannow did not stand alone, in the good old times; there were three others in the same locality. The ivy-clad walls of a portion of one are yet to be seen in a field adjoining Kane's dwelling, called the "*old town*"—another fact to prove that the ancient Bannow stretched away in this direction. The

vestiges of a second are to be seen in the Island of Bannow, in a field known as "*the chapel field*." And the third stood at about one-half mile distant, at a place called Oversands, but I believe all traces of this are at present removed.

I may here remark, that this parish is of peninsular form, running to a sharp point, or headland, at the old church of Bannow; and the castles of Cullinstown, Coolhull, and Danescastle, were admirably placed to protect the peninsula from the inroads of an enemy from the land side, these castles being built on the eastern boundary of the parish, at regular distances from each other. Danescastle, Coolhull, and Cullinstown had each its little church, in its immediate vicinity; and a Devereux, and a Stafford, are still to be found renting the lands upon which Danescastle, and Coolhull castles stand—men of Anglo-Norman descent, still possessing the ruins of early Anglo-Norman masonry. Whether the present race of Bannow men may, or may not, be descended from the hardy fishermen who once inhabited the sand-covered mud cabins which I have noticed, or from the more burley burghers whose "*sweet voices*," in bye-gone times, made the town-hall ring, I cannot say, but here we have the Barrys, Roches, Meylers, Devereuxes, Staffords, Sinnotts, Furlongs, Whites, Rossitters, Parles, &c., whose patronymics tell their Anglo-Norman origin, and a host of Culfers, whom tradition derives from Wales at a very early period.

I have very little to add in support of the authorities quoted by Mr. Graves to prove that Fitz-Stephen landed at Bannow and not at Bag-an-bun. I know the popular tradition runs thus:—

"At the creek of Bag-an-bun,
Ireland was lost and won."

And this tradition very forcibly reminds me of my last visit to that locality. Talking to the solitary artilleryman, who keeps watch and ward over the dismounted old gun on the head of the martello tower, he said, "It was here that Strongbow landed." I appeared not exactly to agree with him, "O, then," he continued, "I am not very long here, and can't insist on it." The man was, however, scarcely to be blamed for his mistake,* as the Ordnance index map of Wexford—very high

* This artilleryman is probably the same who kept "watch and ward" at the martello tower when we sometime since visited the spot. He, of course, gave us the recital of Strongbow's having landed at that point and thrown up the earthen fortifications which there remain, for the protection of his camp; and the man appeared much chagrined when we admonished him of the inaccuracy of his historical details. "But," said he, "I may as well continue to call it Strongbow's camp still, for those who come to visit it every season will not be satisfied—it *must* be Strongbow's camp and nothing else for *them*. Even that same won't satisfy them always, and they insist that I could tell them legends and traditions about it to any extent, if I liked. A gentleman went so hard on me for a legend once, although I told him over and over that I had ne'er a one, that I was fairly forced to invent a story for him, and to say that that cleft in the rock near the camp, was cut by Strongbow with one blow of his sword, just to try the temper of the steel."—EDITORS.

authority—lays down the “site of Strongbow’s tent” on Bag-an-bun point. A very slight acquaintance with Irish history serves to show that Strongbow landed in the immediate vicinity of Waterford.

Throwing history for a moment over board, let us suppose that Fitz-Stephen and his little fleet entered the bay of Bannow. His mariners very likely knew the place well; his vessels at that early period, I dare say, were small, if not, five would have been superfluous to convey 400 warriors from Milford to Bannow, about some sixty miles; Bag-an-bun stood at the extreme south-west point of the bay; the headland rocky and high, and presenting an almost perpendicular front to the sea. There was no beach, the sea even at low water, washing the base of the cliff, over sunken rocks; and even if a landing *were* effected, the route to Wexford was circuitous. On the other hand, the Island of Bannow was situate at the bottom of the bay in the mouth of the harbour; the latter entered by two good channels, one on either side, and the march to Wexford was direct, without any impediment from water, at least. These facts, even in the absence of any historical evidence, I beg to submit, are a good deal in favour of the first English hostile footstep having pressed the shore of Ireland on the Island of Bannow. William Marshall, Earl of Pembroke, founded the abbey of Tintern, opposite the Island of Bannow, in the year 1199, in fulfilment of a vow, made at sea in a storm, to build an abbey where he first found safety. It was, doubtless, in Bannow harbour his ship found shelter—his founding the abbey on its shore is circumstantial evidence that it was so. It appears the Danes knew this harbour; for tradition says they had a settlement at Clonmines, worked mines, and coined money there. At Barrystown, on the eastern side of the river, opposite Clonmines, lead mines, with an admixture of silver, are at present being worked, and the miners lately sank a shaft in the river on the verge of the channel, within a few hundred perches of the castles of Clonmines. The Barrystown mines were worked at some former period, but I do not know whether any old mining shafts at present are to be found on the lands of Clonmines. The river runs close in under the shadow of the castles, within a very few perches of some of them, and the channel is, at this place, said to be very deep; whether any vessels, larger than the gab-bards, which at present pass and repass it, ever came up to it, I cannot say; but even to-day it has a better communication with the sea than Enniscorthy has with Wexford.

It is an historical fact, supported by tradition, and capable of demonstration at the present day, that a channel once existed between the church and the Island of Bannow. I have already stated that the breadth of the bed of this channel is 220 paces, from cliff to cliff, on each side. When the shifting sands in the bay formed a complete barrier across the mouth of this channel, and the drift-sand filled up its bed above high-water mark, then the sand-hillocks began to increase in size and height gradually, and in the course of time attained the shape

and magnitude of those of the other burrows on the coast. A bold high front being presented to the sea, the drift-sand did not blow over it so frequently, nor in such quantities as to prevent the backs of the hillocks, in time, becoming covered with a kind of herbage; and the long roots of the "bennet" on their summits and face kept the sand more or less together, and in this state it was found at the opening of the present century. At that period, the summits of these sand hillocks rose to the height of forty feet above the sea-level, and ran in a line with those lesser ones which then covered the ruins of the cabins before mentioned. A narrow gap or pass through the centre opened a communication between the inner and outer strands, through which, on extraordinary high tides, the waters of the bay and harbour commingled with each other. The ocean face and tops of this range were covered with waving "bennet," and the sloping banks were clad in a thick mantle of herbage—a favourite pasturage for

“ —————all the flocks that feed
On yonder yellow hill.”

But some fifty years past, "high farming" was little thought of in this parish. The iron plough and horse hoe were unknown, or at least very little used in the locality. The wooden plough and block-wheel car did very well, and the people eat and slept, and manufactured their own clothing, never anticipating the day when two millions of the people should be swept away in consequence of a failure of the potato crop; for a dinner of potatoes on Christmas day was then considered a rarity. There was little money made, and less required—the taxes were few, and the rents something like a poor-rate poundage of the present day. Long, circuitous, and deep-rutted was the muddy road which led out of the parish into the open country; and tedious and dreary was the pace of the horse, as he pulled the truckle-car throughout the cold, dark nights of winter, to Wexford market, with the produce of the farm. The distance from Bannow church to Wexford was then fifteen Irish miles. The fifteenth mile-stone is still to be seen on the road-side between Kane's house and the Coast-guard station—a shorter, and more direct road at present leads from this to the capital of the county. But the genius and spirit of one man, completely changed the face of things. Bannow was intersected with public roads and hedge-rows; and the people were taught that a greater treasure than they had yet discovered, lay within a foot of the surface of their farms. A spade was plunged into the hem of the grassy garment which covered the back of the "banks," and the first car-load of sand was thrown into the "dung lough." This was a move in the right direction; it was a step in advance, and a very little experience taught the people, that sand and clay, sand clay and farm-yard manure, or sand and sea-weed, as a compost, produce excellent crops, and act as a desirable agent to make loose and friable the stiff clay soil of the parish. The surface of

the grass once broken, the winds and storms came quickly to the assistance of the manure-gatherers, and scattered the loosened hillocks of drift-sand in all directions, so that at ordinary spring-tides at present, the inner and outer waters rise within a few feet of the highest point of the dried channel, and frequently the outer waters rush over all, when impelled by a storm from the south.

This is not hear-say evidence. I stood in the midst of a storm, on the bank overlooking this bed of the eastern channel, and saw the waters communicate with each other. I was pleased. It established a fact of which I had before been doubtful; and though I could perceive no living thing to take a delight in the storm but myself and the sea-gulls, and covered nearly as I was, and half blinded and choked with the whistling clouds of drifting sands, I exclaimed in great glee—there go the waters of the ocean, again careering over the bed of the same channel through which, probably, the daring Fitz-Stephen, with his thirty Knights, three score Esquires, and three hundred foot soldiers (Keating), passed on his adventurous expedition to assist King Diarmuid in his rebellion against the monarch Roderick!

Tradition says, that the harbour of Wexford had a greater depth of water in the time of the Danes, than at present. What I say of Wexford, may be applied to Bannow, and therefore at the period of the English invasion the present bar of Bannow may have been better, or may have been worse, than it is to day; but, in the twelfth century, two channels led into it, and therefore the depth of water over the harbour must have been greater than now.

The island of Bannow is, as already observed, at present joined to the mainland by a causeway or road, which is generally flooded at spring tides by the waters of the inner harbour. A little to the right of this road is a small but high island, called "Clare's Island." The lost channel, tradition says, ran between this islet and the Island of Bannow, close in under the shadow of the latter, whose side is here very high and steep. An embankment, enclosing a portion of mud-land, lately reclaimed from the inner waters, runs from the causeway to Clare's Island, and from thence to the Island of Bannow, in a north-west direction. This embankment is raised on the bed of the traditional channel; and the portion of it running from the islet to the Island, cuts obliquely that channel, beyond the influence of the drifting sands. The workmen engaged on this part of the dyke, could, with difficulty, raise any embankment. The mud was soft, and the depth of it they could not fathom. An immense quantity of faggots were laid down to form a sort of foundation; but every succeeding tide washed away portions of the soft mud, which had been raised to form the ditch. At length, by drawing to it the hard shingle and clay of the islet, the ditch was raised above high water. This was in the autumn of 1848; but a heavy storm in the succeeding winter effected a breach in the embankment, and the waters again covered the reclaimed acres. The breach

was but a perch in breadth ; and the receding waters, as the tides fell, rushed outwards through this opening with great velocity, and cut a channel for themselves *twenty feet deep*. The soft mud was first swept away, and beneath that the gravel of the lost channel, intermixed with marine shells. Tradition, and my own personal observation, here satisfied me, that I saw deep into the bed of the extinct channel. The waters were again effectually excluded, and the embankment completed in the year 1849. In 1850, a portion of the mud-field was sown with oats and beans. They *did* grow, and I watched their progress with much interest. The oats had a sickly appearance—the beans a rusty and yellowish colour. I believe the plants would never have been sufficiently strong to shoot into ear ; but before that period arrived, storms from the south sent the drift sands sweeping over the waste lying between the field and the outer waters, and these swift messengers of destruction bounded over the southern portion of the embankment, and overspread the already dying oat-crop. The beans came up, few and far between, and after some time the leaves would crisp up, and then fall off. A few did blossom and pod, but they never ripened. The cause was plain : beneath this crop lay the bed of the channel, filled with soft mud to the depth of probably thirty feet ; and so deep and soft is this mud-land, that when the tide rises outside the embankment, the salt-water forces its way through the pores of the mud, and rising to the roots of the plants, destroys their vitality. I have stood on this reclaimed “slob” when the meridian sun of July had parched up its surface, and cut it into innumerable small fissures ; the tide, at the moment, was two feet above the level upon which I stood ; little or no water oozed inward through the ditch—still I saw the pure, clear water rise up through the fissures around me, precisely as if a spring of water were to burst up through the ground-floor of the house in which I write. And when the tide outside the embankment had fallen below the level upon which I stood, the water in the fissures likewise descended until it was lost to my view. However, the consolidation of the mud, by and by, aided by drainage, may convert this quagmire-like piece of mud-land into yellow fields of waving corn and smiling meadows for the worthy islander, whose enterprising spirit afforded me an opportunity of investigating the former existence of this extinct channel. I may here remark, that an imaginary line, winding from Clare’s Island, through the bed of the extinct channel, until it is lost in the waters of the bay, divides the Boyse and Colclough estates—a fact which goes far to prove that the channel under notice formerly divided those properties, and that, in its present state, it is not easy to point out the line of demarcation. The people are well aware that the boundary line runs some place hereabout ; and, some time past, a poor man placed a portable wooden house, in which he and his family resided, upon this imaginary line, so that he should not, as he thought, come under the control of any landlord.

According to tradition, Clare's Island was situate on the eastern verge of the channel ; at present it contains less than a rood of land—but it was larger. About thirty years since, a portion of it was cut off, and carried away to make the road which connects the Island of Bannow with the mainland. Again, in 1848 and 1849, another slice was taken off to assist in raising the embankment. In consequence of these perpendicular cuttings, the observer has a fine view of the formation of the islet. First, slate rock ; secondly, clay ; and, uppermost, a stratum of black mould, studded with bones and marine shells. This layer of mould is about eighteen inches in thickness, and is deepest at the eastern side of the islet. The bones occur in surprising abundance, and did so, I am informed, in the portions of it which were carried away for the road and embankment. Little or no clay or mould is to be found on the west side at present, the rock rising to nearly the surface ; but whether or not this was always so, I am not able to determine. Something very like a transverse section of a grave can be seen, but not more than eighteen or twenty inches in depth. Yet who can say how much of this mould may not have been stripped from the surface and carried away at some bygone period ? The tradition is—that the vessels and fishing craft, in passing in and out of the harbour, stopped by the side of this island, and that the bones are those of animals, among other refuse, thrown on it by the sailors and fishermen. This little island is rich in legendary lore : it was a favourite haunt with “the good people ;” and often and often, on a calm still summer's evening, when the placid waters of the harbour began to reflect the images of the moon and her sister stars, have the joyous laugh, and merry song, the sprightly dance, and entrancing music of those aerial beings, been heard on Clare's Island, and then, in an instant, thousands of those light-footed gentry would be seen to skim the surface of the clear blue waters, in uproarious confusion of sweet sounds, on their journey to some other favourite resting-place.

The channel is said to have been thirty feet deep, between Clare's Island and Bannow Island, and if the *town* had a *quay*, it stood at the rear of the Coast-guard station and Kane's house, a most commodious and sheltered situation. Tradition affirms that a quay of brick ran along here. To the east of this spot, on a small stream or “pill,” now embanked, stood, within the memory of man, the remains of a water-mill. A few perches to the west of this embankment, a hard causeway, exposed at an hour or two of ebb, runs nearly north and south, and loses itself in the mud before it reaches the quay, under Kane's haggard. This causeway is called the “black bridge.” Several pieces of sound black oak were taken up out of the mud here some fifty years ago. It is to the destruction of the eastern channel, and not to the drift sands, that I would attribute the *decay* of the town of Bannow ; the drift sands injured nothing but the fishermen's cabins.

Much of the celebrity which Bannow has attained arises from the

legends about its *buried city*. Yet Bannow does, and will ever possess attractions for the Irish antiquary, and historian; for though her lofty towers may not lie buried beneath the sands, still it can never be forgotten that here the banner of the "proud invader" was first planted on the Emerald Isle.

ANCIENT IRISH STAINED GLASS.

BY THE REV. JAMES GRAVES.

[*Read at the Meeting of January 2nd.*]

That section of archæology, which relates to the history of the manufactures and industrial arts of our ancestors, is perhaps one of the most interesting and useful branches of a science—I am happy to believe—rapidly taking its place amongst the pursuits with which every educated man feels himself bound to become conversant. It is now acknowledged that our ancestors carried to perfection many arts which we moderns have lost, or are but slowly recovering.

At the last meeting of this Society I had the honour of drawing the attention of the members to the long disused, and but recently revived manufacture of decorative pavement tiles, as illustrated by specimens from the various churches of Kilkenny, now deposited in the Society's museum; and I endeavoured to shew that, even in a utilitarian point of view, the study of antiquity is not such a useless "back-looking curiosity" as some would have us to suppose. I am, on the present occasion, enabled to illustrate, also from our recently formed museum, another art brought to very great perfection in days of yore—a perfection which the present age, notwithstanding its superior scientific knowledge, has scarcely yet equalled. I allude to the art of staining, and painting on glass. The examples of the different descriptions of decorative glass used in the fourteenth century, and which I now submit to the meeting, are selected from a considerable quantity of that material, found during the summer of 1846, in the course of some excavations then being carried on at the Cathedral of St. Canice, and since presented to the museum of the Society by its Very Rev. President, the Dean of Ossory—a gift, the value of which is enhanced by the fact, that in no other part of Ireland does there at present exist an example of glass, at the same time so ancient and so unquestionably genuine. Every one has heard of the famous painted windows—said to have exhibited the history of our Saviour—formerly the pride of our Cathedral, and erected in the 14th century by Bishop Richard de Ledrede—for which the Legate Rinuccini offered £700, and which shortly after-

ADDENDUM.

Page 229, after last line add—

Since the foregoing was in print I have been informed by the Rev. James Graves, that Ledwich has committed a twofold mistake in stating that the "*Sacri Lus*" was lost, and that the poems were composed by the young gentlemen of Kilkenny College. The volume in question is still to be found in Primate Marsh's Library, Class K. 3. Tab. 5. No. 9; and is entitled "*Sacri Lus* *In Vsum* Scholæ Kilkenniensis. Dublinii: Typis Regiis, & Venum dantur apud Josephum Wilde. c1o locL. * * *". The date is defective, having been partly cut away by the binder. The book is in small quarto, and is imperfect, ending at p. 64; it consists of Latin poetry in elegiac measure, chiefly on Scripture subjects. On the fly-leaf is written, in an old hand, "Daniel Mead, ex dono Geo. Pigott." On the title, "Mich. Jephson"; whose library was purchased by Primate Marsh.

CORRIGENDA.

- p. 117, l. 8, for "Anglesea" read "Anglesea".
- p. 133, l. 27, for "these" read "those".
- p. 142, l. 34, for "of" read "of".
- p. 148, note, l. 1, after "Phœnician" dele .,
- p. 157, l. 17, for "*Muillend*" read "*Muilend*".
- ib., l. 24, for "*Maelodron*" read "*Maelodran*".
- p. 164, l. 11, for "*Muilenu*" read "*Muilenn*".
- p. 174, l. 35, for "connection" read "connexion".
- p. 177, l. 9, for "*barry of four*" read "*four barrulets*".
- p. 182, l. 27, for "Edward" read "Edmond".
- p. 187, l. 31, for "twenty-four" read "fourteen".
- p. 191, l. 27, after "of" insert "the".
- p. 192, l. 37, after "tenure" dele .,
- p. 193, ll. 44, 45, for "two trefoil-headed niches" read "a shallow canopy".
- p. 195, ll. 14, 22, for "Sugard" read "Ingard".
- p. 198, l. 8, for "acre" read "Loftus acre".
- ib., l. 18, for "Ballymagin" read "Ballymagir".
- p. 200, l. 9, after "rain" dele .,
- p. 213, l. 39, for "meta" read "metal".
- p. 216, l. 34, for "Vol. I." read "Vol. II".
- ib., l. 35, for "*luaned*" read "*luued*".
- p. 222, l. 15, for "magnificent" read "magnificent".
- p. 240, l. 39, after "brothers" dele .,
- p. 260, l. 32, for "of Nassau" read "daughter of the first Duke of Beaufort".